

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today the House of Representatives passed the final version of H.R. 2, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization Act to extend coverage to 11 million children by a vote of [290 to 135](#). Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, voted for the bill.

"Change has finally come for the families of 11 million children in America who will now have access to quality, affordable healthcare," Rep. Becerra said. "The enactment of this essential expansion of children's health coverage couldn't have come at a more pressing time for America's working families. Not only is this the right thing to do, it is a smart thing to do to stimulate the economy by freeing family budgets of the burden of healthcare bills. I look forward to seeing President Barack Obama sign this historic piece of legislation."

H.R. 2, based on legislation that passed the House and Senate twice with overwhelming bipartisan support in the previous 110th Congress and vetoed by President Bush both times, passed the House and Senate earlier this month. It preserves coverage for 7 million children currently covered by SCHIP and extends coverage to 4 million uninsured children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in SCHIP or Medicaid. The bill is fully paid for by a 61 cent increase in the tobacco tax.

The bill includes language from the Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA), giving states the option of covering legal immigrant children who have been in the country for fewer than five years. The current five-year wait period puts these children at risk of suffering from undetected diseases that could turn into costly chronic conditions if gone untreated.

H.R. 2 will now be sent to the desk of President Obama, who has said he will sign the legislation into law today.



[Click here](#) to view Rep. Becerra's floor statement on H.R. 2.

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